

F O W
MINUTES OF MEETING

October 21, 2008

Present: Bill B.(President), Alma M. (Secretary), Jim R. (Historian), Steve G. (Park Supervisor), Vicki S. (Webmistress), Sandy (Membership), Steve C. (Vice-President), Lars A., Jane, Wendy, Al, Annie G., Connor K., Sam, Carl C., Rob, Pam J.,

Present: 17

1) Opening Remarks

Introductions were held, and visitors were welcomed.

2) Vice President Report

Steve C. reported on the Trail Care Day last week. There were over 20 people present, working on a bridge and trail clean up with loppers and saws. Another group cleaned up trash from trails. Steve G. noted that Andy worked on the bunker and put in a drainage system on the ramp, as well as a pipe. He also made a diversion ditch to catch runoff.

The muck truck and wheelbarrows were used to complete one of the bridges used for the horses. Steve G. noted we have a supply of stone gravel, pipe and a lot of pressure treated lumber in various sizes from Braintree Lumber. He is running low on nails, but FOW will help with that.

3) Secretary's Report

The minutes from the final meeting were accepted.

4) Treasurer's Report

Eric O. is absent.

5) Bridge Inventory

A survey of the length, condition, upgrades and information on Wompy's bridges was conducted by Lars. He found 31 bridges in the Park and passed around a map with some basic data about them. He's not sure if the data is what we need, but contains information on the length, width, condition, and location of these bridges, which are some of the basic information we will need to discuss them more thoroughly. After the meeting, a group will meet with him to see if any other bridges can be located.

Bill noted that countless hours have been put into building these bridges, as well as thousands of dollars in materials. As a group, we should be tracking the changes to the park over the years as a result of how non-State monies were spent.

Lars was in contact with Jim D., who started a similar project several years ago. However, there was too much data on that former spreadsheet.

Wendy and Al mentioned the locations of a few of the bridges which are safe for horses (have to support at least 1500 pounds), including one that was recently constructed. Bill B. asked if it were possible to get the horses on bridges that are currently not passable and they noted that, with some brush back work, they could be accessible. At least 18 feet of clearance and 3 feet wide is needed to make them passable.

Bill B. mentioned at the last meeting that we wanted to find some bridges that are moist and do some tests on them to see what we could do to make them a bit less slippery. Ideas were circulated like a type of poly-urethane finish with sand on top before it dried, then a second coat on top of the sand. The problem with poly-urethane is that the surface needs to be dry first, while the bridges are wet. Acrylic epoxy paint (a type of deck paint) was suggested by Steve G. because it can be used on a wet surface.

Carl will look to see if he can find an additive grit of some type to mix with paint. Vicki made a recommendation that there are different sizes of grit available. Carl will look to see what he can find, and will be reimbursed by FOW.

Steve G. suggested using bag sand, while Carl suggested a product called Black Beauty or walnut husks. A motion was held and passed for Carl to purchase product and FOW will reimburse him.

6) Planning for the Future – FOW 5 Year Plan

Bill discussed the idea of having a 5 year plan for the group, which was mentioned at our last meeting. Various ideas were generated including the following:

- a) Carl suggested having coffee and refreshments before a meeting.
- b) Steve G. suggested having a cookout in the Commons Room.
- c) Jane said we need to increase membership to be successful. She wondered why our membership has dropped since last year, and noted that Blue Hills has over 1000 members. She wondered how we can be more inclusive to those who come and/or join to explain what FOW does. She suggested being a mentor to a new member, by calling them to invite or pick them up for a meeting, as this would help them to feel more connected. She said many may not come to a meeting but would like to help.
- d) Jane suggested an “Adopt a Trail” program where someone would be responsible for a portion of a trail to keep it clean and perform basic maintenance of clipping or brushing it back, while large problems could be reported to Steve G. He said the Trail Watch people send him these types of reports. Lars recently reported a very large hole in the pavement, which he hadn’t seen or known about for months. Bill said he’s a member of the Friends of Blue Hills, and noted that about 10 of the 1000 members do work. He said most of these members would rather support the park monetarily, and that the Blue Hills also has an “Adopt a Trail” type program. Individuals as well as groups adopt trails at Blue Hills.
- e) Lars suggested planning more Trail and Park Maintenance Days, rather than just the four we currently do. Alma suggested having a variety of projects to do during

- these days, like picking up trash, building bridges, clearing trails, etc. so as to attract a wider variety of members.
- f) Bill suggested that assuming we came up with a project to do that needed volunteers, could Annie and Connor muster up the manpower from the high school? Connor said they could put signups in the office and make announcements to help seniors get their 15 hours of community service. Annie suggested that the problem with community service is you need to do at least 7 hours with one particular organization. Carl said we usually do 4 hour blocks of time, so they could volunteer for something for 2 days. Steve C. suggested having some members of the Wood Shop class do something with the wood that we have. Connor will speak to the Wood Shop teacher.
 - g) Alma suggested having some sort of way to pay online to get members to pay on the spot, rather than just sending in a membership application without paying. Vicki said we could look for cheap rates with Pay Pal, to get this up and running. Alma also asked if Jim could put an extra page on the newsletter that would include membership information so people could just rip off the page to become a member and mail it in with their dues.
 - h) Pam mentioned that a lot of people were using the Duane Street entrance, and they didn't know what FOW is or does. She told them that the money goes back into the park, which surprised many of them. Pam suggested having a Membership Drive Day at various kiosks, getting people to sign up with clip boards and information about the Trail Clean up Days, as well as other things we do as a group. Pam would like to work with Steve G. to scope out various Meet and Greet Days to help generate information about FOW.
 - i) **Sandy has sent numerous e-mail reminders and letters telling members to renew their membership. Alma suggested sending them their last newsletter with a notice that this would be their final FOW communication until they renew. As a result of non-payment of dues, she would also proceed to delete them from the membership e-mail list. In order for lax members to become aware that their dues are not paid, we have to delete them so they will see that they are not receiving any further information from the group. At this point, they would need to pay their dues to continue with FOW correspondence. Sandy will send out a courtesy e-mail letting them know that they will be deleted from the membership for non-payment of dues and this will be implemented.**
 - j) Sandy suggested having a check off on the membership form that would indicate what members would be interested in doing. Questions could include: Would you like to help on a Trail Care Day? Would you like to geocache? Would you prefer to just pay your dues and not participate in any projects? etc. Pam offered to work with Sandy to call members to find out their interests.
 - k) Pam suggested having markers that indicate easy, medium, and difficult rides on various trails. Wendy suggested making a map that describes the difficulty level of various trails, which would also include mileage. Alma said this would also be helpful for runners. Bill said we could use a GPS and create a PDF on our website, as well as put some into the kiosks. Bill said we could change trails online when or if we notice the trail is getting worn, and this would work better

than having a permanent map of the trails, and Steve G. agreed. Bill asked for the runners, bikers, hikers and horseback riders amongst us to come up with lists of these types of trails with levels of difficulty. Lars suggested plotting these for us. Alma will bring some information on some of her running routes for him to plot at the next meeting.

Bill summarized that a large part of our discussion centered on growing our membership. He said that now that we are a 501c3 organization, we can generate more income from companies who give monies to these types of organizations. Sandy suggested putting that information onto the membership application, and Vicki will add this, as well as information that all dues go back into the maintenance of the park.

One of these large grants was for \$10,000, and Steve G. tried to apply last year to install windows in another building at Wompy. Another idea he had was to fix the Gatehouse and put the FOW office in there. His District Manager is ok with the idea. Currently, it doesn't have heat and would cost more than \$10,000 to rehab.

Bill said we need to have a vision of Wompatuck for the future, including what it does and doesn't have. He suggested we think of ideas for large capital projects, as well as small ones like nature labeling of items. Vicki will print out a list of goals that is on the website to bring to the next meeting. Bill suggested a splash pad for the Campground, which would negate the use of a lifeguard. A playground was also suggested, as well as a pavilion. Another suggestion was made of combining campsites to allow horses to camp with their owners.

7) Upcoming Events

Sat. November 8 at 1 pm is the dedication for the Bunker. E-mails were sent to newspapers and radio stations across Southeastern Massachusetts. Jim will supply refreshments and get reimbursed by FOW. The Bunker is 200 yards to the right of the Visitor Center on the right hand side.

Steve C. will also post information of upcoming events on our FOW online group calendar.

8) New Business

- a) Annie and Connor are high school seniors at Hingham. Seniors have an option to work with an organization during their final semester for 2 months. There are 3 seniors in their group, and they would like to get involved with Wompy because it's similar to something they would like to pursue in college. The idea is to do a community service product during school hours for these 2 months, and they would write about their experiences to the Hingham Journal. During this time, they wouldn't go to school, but would write papers about what they learned as well as make the public aware of the project.

Steve G. suggested a greeter position in the Visitor Center. Annie said they could also help with fund raising, if needed. Bill suggested having one remain at the

Visitor Center, while the other 2 help with spring planting and clean ups on a rotating basis. Annie said they could also work on weekends, if needed. They have to keep a journal which shows what they've learned, and then make a presentation about it. Their initial proposal would have to be fleshed out and proposed by Thanksgiving.

Bill asked if they would be interested in helping people or working with trails and rehabbing structures, etc. They seemed more interested in hands on work. Sandy suggested a historical brochure about the park, but Steve G. said it had been attempted by seniors at Duxbury High and it was a difficult task. They weren't able to be totally historically accurate because of the size of the task.

Steve C. suggested having historical information set up at various parts of the park on certain portions of the trails. He thought it would be nice to come upon a hidden foundation and have a nearby sign describing it. Steve G. said that Hingham is the least involved school at Wompy, and Annie said they would like to involve other members of the school in their project.

In the final analysis, Annie said they would want to actually "do" a project that could physically show what they've done to others. Steve G. suggested a hiking, back packing or mountain biking event to raise awareness of the park to students at Hingham or to adults. Rob suggested having a 5k trail race, and Bill said they could have it for a charity that is near and dear to their hearts.

Jim suggested they have a hike with the Native American point of view with a friend of his. He knows where they had caves and fire, and where the carbon is still visible. In Bear Cove Park, arrowheads were also found. Sandy said they could do a write-up about the Native Americans in the park and make a map showing the various locations. Jim added the early settlers of the Fox and Lincoln's could be included.

Bill suggested they go to the FOW website and look at the history section to see some information about the park, as well as past newsletters.

- b) Pam saw a live lobster in the middle of the road between Union Street and Holly Pond.
- c) A pleasure ride for the Bay State Horse Riders Association will be held this Sunday at 9 am.

10) Future Meeting dates

Future meeting dates are November 17th and December 15th. The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 17. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Submitted by,
Alma Ramos-McDermott
Secretary